



HEARTS FOR
THE HOMELESS®

Since 1990

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Dear Supporters,

I hope you had a nice Labor Day and that your summer, amid the pandemic, was enjoyable and that you were able to make the best of it. The pandemic has reminded me that life is what we make of it and that everyday is a gift. I invite you to join me in finding peace and strength in the Word; *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."* John 14:27 ESV.

It has been on my heart to share how grateful we are at Hearts for your continued support over the years and throughout this pandemic.

Your support has provided Hearts the ability to serve the homeless on the street meals, clothing and care items, through our Mobile Soup Kitchen, and most recently, in the last six months, to those staying in emergency COVID-19 shelters. By sending meals to the shelters, the number of homeless individuals Hearts is serving has doubled. God willing, our expanded services to the homeless and poor on the street will continue long beyond the pandemic because we've quickly seen that these needs existed well before the pandemic.

As the curtain of the pandemic was rolled back, it revealed the harsh reality of the substantial number of homeless individuals in Buffalo and the suffrage within this population. While the Corona virus didn't cause their homelessness, it did put their needs front and center and the amount of them was eye-opening as agencies like the Restoration Society and the Code Blue Initiative established a plan to shelter and feed them during COVID.

Since feeding the poor and homeless is the core program offered through our organization, it was a natural progression to extend this service to include these agencies into our current feeding program at no cost to them. We feel called to continue using our existing resources, as we have throughout this summer, and future donations to meet the needs of the vulnerable population on the streets.

Please pray with us that Hearts can meet the various needs of the homeless population, even in new ways, such as providing mobile shower and laundry facilities, and a much needed additional drop in center; and, that while we nourish people's physical needs that they experience the love of Christ and are nourished spiritually; that each person who comes in contact with our outreach feels love and companionship.

We pray the same for our new food pantry and know that by completing our food pantry construction project, Hearts Harvest Food Pantry and Cafe, we can also better serve the disadvantaged in Riverside and beyond. From the expansion of our homeless meal program to the accelerated opening of our food pantry, your support is reaching more people than ever before.

We are so excited to share with you some major updates with Hearts Harvest Food Pantry and Café. Over the last two years, contractors have been working on the rehabilitation and remodeling of the building that will be the permanent location for the Hearts Harvest Food Pantry. The building has come a long way and we hope

to move the food pantry from the temporary location into the permanent space by year's end. From a new electrical service to a new roof and floors, and everything in between, the building will be a safe, functional and modern space. Although we've learned from the pandemic that a "building" is just that, a building, it is important to make this space a special place for the community.

At Hearts we love people no matter where we serve: the street, a parking lot, a shelter, a garage, anywhere. But, when I think of families bringing their children to the food pantry, I want them to see a welcoming place, a place that was built with loving and serving in mind. A place where a child could look back years later and say, "that was a food pantry?" Please keep an eye out for more details on the progress of this project. September's newsletter shows some photos that highlight the progress.

The food pantry in our temporary onsite location served over 55,755 meals in June, July and August. Since opening the temporary location in January, the food pantry served 12,561 individuals and 4,315 households. These numbers help paint a picture and show both the need and impact of this food pantry, a project made possible by your faith in Hearts. The completion of the permanent location will ensure that food security remains strong and stable in 14207.

If you have given to this project, thank you, and if you have not, please consider making a financial contribution to help get this project over the finish line. This building is more than just a brick and mortar project, it will help the fabric of this community by providing a food pantry, community café, and space for so much more. On behalf of the people we are serving, let me say thank you in advance, the support truly means a lot.

If you have any questions about the ministry, please contact me directly, nick@heartsforthehomeless.org, or by calling the office. I'd love to connect with you.

With appreciation and love,
Nichola M. Calandra
Chief Executive Officer